

human rights violations, and imprisonment of innocent Americans.

Thirty States, to date, Mr. Speaker, have imposed sanctions against Iran. Both Democrats and Republicans have worked at the State and local level to enact laws to ensure that State assets are not invested in and State contracts are not awarded to companies that do business with Iran.

As long as Iran continues its outrageous activity abroad, it is our right and it is our duty to make sure that we are not complicit in funding its terrorism, its human rights abuses, and its other activity that is contrary to the U.S. national interests and global stability.

Now, there is some ambiguity and some confusion about State sanctions that are authorized under the so-called Iran deal of this year. This legislation clarifies, it puts an exclamation point, and it reaffirms the legal right of States to maintain these sanctions as enacted into law under the 2010 statute until Iran ends its support of terrorism and reverses its abhorrent human rights violations.

Please join my colleagues Representative TED DEUTCH of Florida, Representative DAN LIPINSKI of Illinois, Representative MIKE POMPEO of Kansas, Representative BRAD SHERMAN of California, and Representative LEE ZELDIN of New York, along with me, in this effort to ensure that the right of States to maintain these important sanctions against Iran prevails.

We can ensure that States have this right and this authority from preventing their resources from funding Iranian terrorism and human rights abuses.

END HUNGER NOW—MONTE'S MARCH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, last week, I had the pleasure of taking part in Monte's March, an annual hunger walk in western Massachusetts. The march started in 2010 and is named after its founder, Monte Belmonte, a local activist and WRSI The River radio host in Northampton.

Over the course of 2 days, we walked 43 miles across western Massachusetts, from Springfield to Northampton to Greenfield, to raise awareness about the very real problem of hunger in our communities and help families in need this holiday season.

We had a great group walking with us this year, led by Monte, and including Andrew Morehouse, the executive director of the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, University of Massachusetts Amherst Chancellor Kumble Subbaswamy, Northwestern District Attorney David Sullivan, and a host of other local officials and community members.

I want to say a special thanks to my colleagues Congressmen RICHIE NEAL

and JOE KENNEDY for joining us along the way and helping to support those in need.

Also joining us on that march were Sean Barry of Four Seasons Liquor in Hadley, Erika Cooper of Tea Guys in Whately, Ben Clark of Clarkdale Fruit Farm in Deerfield, Natalie Blais of UMass Amherst, Steve Fendel from Gill, Marty Dagoberto, Dan Finn from Pioneer Valley Local First, Chia Collins from Northampton, Kristen Elechko, Georgian and Rick Kristek, and many, many, many more.

This year's walk was extra special for me because my son, Patrick, walked the entire route with us both days.

Mr. Speaker, every day, 48 million Americans struggle with hunger, including 15.3 million children. We live in the richest country on Earth and have greater access to food than any previous generation, so the fact that hunger continues to be so widespread in America is absolutely stunning.

Monte's March was started in 2010 to do something about it. This year's walk was the longest and biggest effort yet.

Bright and early last Monday morning, our group of walkers began our march in the Mason Square neighborhood of Springfield. The Mason Square neighborhood is one of those communities in western Massachusetts most in need, with so many families living in poverty and facing food hardship. In fact, childhood poverty rates have been as high as 59 percent in this area alone.

For these families, overcoming hunger is especially challenging because the neighborhood is a "food desert," an area where affordable and healthy food, like fresh fruits and vegetables, are hard to come by. With no full-line supermarket within walking distance for residents to purchase food at affordable prices, we wanted to make sure that the Mason Square neighborhood was front and center in this year's march.

It also gave us the opportunity to thank the Mason Square Health Task Force for their tireless efforts to address hunger and to show our deep appreciation to local feeding programs like St. John's Congregation Church.

We then marched through Springfield, Chicopee, and Holyoke before finishing day one in Northampton. Seventeen miles were behind us, with day two still to go.

We started on Tuesday morning walking through Northampton, then Hadley, and then Amherst, where we stopped at the Amherst Survival Center.

The Amherst Survival Center is an amazing place. Since 1976, they have welcomed everyone who has come through their doors with open arms and a kind word. They help those who are struggling to meet their basic needs. All of their services are free. They run a food pantry, community meal program, drop-in health clinic, job-readiness workshops and job fairs, and a host of other important programs.

After our brief visit, it was back to the pavement, through Sunderland and Deerfield, before finally ending in Greenfield.

We walked a total of 26 miles on day two. Along the way, we felt the incredible support of the western Massachusetts community. People stopped us along the way to add canned food and other donations to our shopping cart. They came out of their homes and their businesses and schools, or they stopped their cars along the side of the road to offer words of encouragement.

Along the way, we helped raise more than \$150,000 for The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, which distributes hundreds of thousands of pounds of food throughout the emergency feeding network in the region.

Mr. Speaker, by the end, we were sore and tired, but we were exhilarated by people's generosity and support. When you add it all up, the outpouring of donations and support from our community will help provide more than 450,000 meals to families in need.

The good news is that hunger is a solvable problem. We just need to muster the political will to help more communities like these in Massachusetts and across the country.

There is not a single congressional district in the United States where hunger isn't an issue affecting the daily lives of kids, families, seniors, or veterans. We all have a stake in this, and with strong grassroots support from communities in all 50 States, just like the ones we visited over 2 days, we have the power to make a real difference and help the 48 million Americans struggling with hunger.

Mr. Speaker, during this holiday season, I urge my colleagues and all Americans to remember those who are struggling with hunger. They are our neighbors or colleagues and our friends.

I want to thank everyone who supported this year's Monte's March and especially want to thank the incredible community partners on the ground for their tireless efforts day in and day out. You inspire us, and we thank you for your service.

FIXING AMERICA'S SURFACE TRANSPORTATION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. CURBELO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act, or FAST Act. This critical legislation will provide 5 years of fully paid-for transportation projects across the Nation to repair our aging infrastructure.

The FAST Act makes important reforms to highway and vehicle safety and expands public transportation to make Federal investment more cost-effective. It also expands funding available for bridges and roads.

And, most importantly, Mr. Speaker, this bill was done through the regular order process, with transparent amendments considered and all Members having their say.